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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/165,248	10/01/1998	SUDHA RATHI	AMAT/2966/PD	7619

32588 7590 01/28/2003

APPLIED MATERIALS, INC.
2881 SCOTT BLVD. M/S 2061
SANTA CLARA, CA 95050

EXAMINER

FOURSON III, GEORGE R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2823

DATE MAILED: 01/28/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Applicati n No.

09/165,248

Applicant(s)

RATHI ET AL.

Examiner

George Fourson

Art Unit

2823

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication app ars on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 December 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 15-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 15-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

The proposed drawing correction and/or the proposed substitute sheets of drawings, filed on 6/27/02 have been approved. A proper drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The correction to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claims 15-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Endo et al '150, Europe '440 and applicant's admitted prior art and further in view of either Naik et al, Yau et al or Chiang et al, all 3 newly cited.

Endo et al '150 and Europe '440 as stated to be applied to claims 15-22 in the paper mailed 3/20/02.

Naik et al discloses use of SiC etch stop in a low-k multilevel metal system (col.4, line 2). Yau et al discloses use of SiC as a low-k etch stop material (col.3, lines 1-11). Chiang et al discloses use of SiC as an etch stop material (col.15, line 2).

In view of the disclosures of Europe '440 and either Naik et al, Yau et al or Chiang et al, that SiC is useful as a dielectric layer, barrier layer and etch stop, it would have been within the scope of one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of Endo et al '150 and Europe '440 with either Naik et al, Yau et al or Chiang et al to enable formation of the structure of instant prior art figure 1.

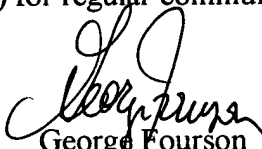
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The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group Receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956. See MPEP 203.08.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to examiner George Fourson whose telephone number is (703) 308-2544. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Olik Chaudhuri, can be reached on (703) 306-2794. The fax number for this group is (703)308-7722 (or extensions 7724, 3431 or 3432) for regular communications and (703)308-7382 for after final communications.


George Fourson
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2823

GFourson
January 23, 2003